

Senate, April 16, 1998. The Committee on Appropriations reported through SEN. CRISCO, 17th DIST., Chairman of the Committee on the part of the Senate, that the substitute bill ought to pass.

AN ACT CONCERNING JOB TRAINING.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

- 1 Section 1. (NEW) (a) For purposes of this  
2 act, "self-sufficiency standard" means a  
3 calculation of the income an employed adult  
4 requires to meet his family's needs, including,  
5 but not limited to, housing, food, day care,  
6 transportation and medical costs. The standard  
7 shall take into account geographical variations in  
8 costs and the age and number of children in the  
9 family.
- 10 (b) Not later than July 1, 1999, the state  
11 shall adopt a self-sufficiency standard, which  
12 shall be used for planning and evaluating  
13 state-supported job training, placement and  
14 employment retention programs. State agencies  
15 conducting assessments of, and providing job  
16 services for, welfare recipients and other  
17 unemployed persons shall use the standard to  
18 determine the education and skill training  
19 required to assist job seekers in obtaining  
20 employment.
- 21 Sec. 2. (NEW) (a) There shall be established  
22 in the Labor Department, in cooperation with the  
23 regional work force development boards, a "Workers

24 As Learners" program to enhance the economic  
25 competitiveness of Connecticut's businesses by  
26 increasing the language proficiency, skills and  
27 education of its workers. This program shall be  
28 available to unemployed persons and persons  
29 receiving public assistance, as well as to all  
30 Connecticut businesses and all persons employed by  
31 such businesses. Subsidized services under the  
32 program shall be provided only to those persons  
33 eligible for publicly-subsidized job training.

34 (b) This program shall include basic  
35 education and occupational skills training  
36 combined with subsidized or unsubsidized work  
37 experience and employment. The program shall  
38 include, but not be limited to, the following: (1)  
39 Work study, internship or apprenticeship  
40 opportunities; (2) on or near job site adult  
41 skills training with curriculum related to job  
42 opportunities; (3) occupational skills training;  
43 (4) case management and counseling in successful  
44 work skills; and (5) subsidized child care and  
45 transportation, where needed.

46 Sec. 3. (NEW) (a) The Labor Department shall  
47 assess each person eligible for  
48 publicly-subsidized job training services for the  
49 purpose of developing a job training plan. The  
50 assessment shall include an evaluation of the  
51 person in the following areas: Work history,  
52 education and basic skill level occupational  
53 interests, barriers to employment, such as the  
54 need for transportation and child care, domestic  
55 violence or substance abuse and support service  
56 needs.

57 (b) The Department of Social Services shall  
58 screen each person subject to time-limited  
59 benefits under the temporary family assistance  
60 program at the time the person is determined to be  
61 eligible for such benefits for the purpose of  
62 identifying the person's language proficiency,  
63 skills, work experience, job interests and  
64 barriers to employment, as defined by the federal  
65 Social Security Act, 42 USC 603(a)(5)(C)(ii)(I).

66 (1) Any person with two or more barriers to  
67 employment, as defined by the federal Social  
68 Security Act, 42 USC 603(a)(5)(C)(ii)(I), shall be  
69 referred to the "Workers As Learners" initiative  
70 established in section 2 of this act, and shall be

71 assessed in accordance with subsection (a) of this  
72 section.

73 (2) Any person who has been identified as not  
74 having two or more barriers to employment, as  
75 defined by the federal Social Security Act, 42 USC  
76 603(a)(5)(C)(ii)(I), and who has not been  
77 successful in obtaining employment within three  
78 months of his eligibility determination shall be  
79 referred to the Labor Department for an assessment  
80 in accordance with subsection (a) of this section.  
81 Following this assessment, the Labor Department,  
82 in cooperation with the regional work force  
83 development boards, shall provide said person with  
84 job training and any necessary support services,  
85 including, but not limited to, child care,  
86 transportation, substance abuse and domestic  
87 violence referral.

88 (c) Any person subject to time-limited  
89 benefits under the temporary family assistance  
90 program who has obtained employment but may  
91 require additional skills to improve his earning  
92 potential and increase the likelihood of becoming  
93 self-sufficient, as determined by the standard  
94 adopted pursuant to section 1 of this act, shall  
95 be offered the opportunity to participate in the  
96 "Workers As Learners" program established in  
97 section 2 of this act, and shall be so notified,  
98 in writing, by the Department of Social Services.

99 (d) Any person eligible for time-limited  
100 benefits under the temporary family assistance  
101 program as of the effective date of this act, who  
102 is not currently reporting earnings, shall be  
103 screened by the Department of Social Services  
104 within three months of the effective date of this  
105 act, in accordance with subsections (a) and (b) of  
106 section 2 of this act, unless substantially  
107 similar screening has already been completed for  
108 the person. If substantially similar screening has  
109 already been completed for the person, the  
110 Department of Social Services shall document the  
111 date and nature of such screening.

112 Sec. 4. (NEW) Any person who is subject to  
113 time-limited benefits under the temporary family  
114 assistance program shall be deemed to be in  
115 compliance with federal work participation  
116 requirements of the federal Temporary Assistance  
117 for Needy Families program, provided said person  
118 participates in an education or training program

119 that is initiated as the result of a screening or  
120 assessment that results in a determination that  
121 such education or training program is required in  
122 order for the person to obtain employment, or that  
123 such education or training program is required to  
124 enable a person who has obtained employment to  
125 acquire skills necessary to increase the person's  
126 employability and earning potential. Such  
127 education and training programs shall be (1)  
128 approved by a state agency or its contractor, (2)  
129 targeted to jobs available in the labor market,  
130 and (3) designed to comply with federal work  
131 participation requirements under the federal  
132 Temporary Assistance for Needy Families block  
133 grant or other federal programs. Any person who,  
134 without good cause, is not satisfactorily  
135 performing in such educational or training program  
136 shall not be deemed to be in compliance with  
137 federal work participation requirements of the  
138 federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families  
139 program.

140 Sec. 5. (NEW) (a) The Labor Department, in  
141 cooperation with each regional work force  
142 development board, shall establish a two-year  
143 pilot program to: (1) Expand work-study  
144 opportunities at community-technical colleges and  
145 vocational-technical high schools; (2) expand the  
146 customized job training program at the Labor  
147 Department which gives grants to employers to  
148 train incumbent workers; (3) expand child care  
149 programs at community-technical colleges and  
150 vocational-technical high schools, including the  
151 award of bond moneys, where necessary for capital  
152 improvements; (4) establish a competitive grant  
153 program that awards grants to community-technical  
154 colleges, vocational-technical high schools, local  
155 or regional boards of education or regional  
156 educational service centers which offer adult  
157 education programs, employers and community-based  
158 education providers for innovative short courses,  
159 flexible class schedules, "contextual learning"  
160 curricula related to job skills, innovative  
161 distance learning or on-site learning initiatives.  
162 This program shall be funded from moneys allocated  
163 to the state from the federal Temporary Assistance  
164 to Needy Families block grant or other state  
165 funds.

166 (b) The Labor Commissioner shall adopt  
167 regulations, in accordance with the provisions of  
168 chapter 54 of the general statutes, to carry out  
169 the purposes of this section. In addition to any  
170 other rules or procedures the Labor Commissioner  
171 deems necessary to carry out the purposes of this  
172 section, the regulations shall establish the  
173 criteria for awarding the grants authorized under  
174 this section and the terms and conditions of such  
175 grants.

176 (c) Not later than one year after the  
177 effective date of this act, the Labor Commissioner  
178 shall submit a report containing an evaluation of  
179 the operation and effectiveness of the pilot  
180 program authorized under this section to the joint  
181 standing committees of the General Assembly having  
182 cognizance of matters relating to appropriations,  
183 human services and labor and public employees.

184 Sec. 6. (NEW) (a) The Labor Department, in  
185 cooperation with each regional work force  
186 development board, shall establish a two-year  
187 pilot program designed to assist Connecticut  
188 workers and job seekers who lack transportation in  
189 securing reliable transportation to employment,  
190 educational programs, job training and child care.  
191 This pilot program shall be funded from moneys  
192 allocated to the state from the federal Temporary  
193 Assistance to Needy Families block grant or other  
194 state funds.

195 (b) The Labor Commissioner shall adopt  
196 regulations, in accordance with the provisions of  
197 chapter 54 of the general statutes, to carry out  
198 the purposes of this section. In addition to any  
199 regulations the Labor Commissioner deems necessary  
200 to carry out the purposes of this section, the  
201 regulations shall include eligibility requirements  
202 for participation in the pilot program.

203 (c) Not later than one year after the  
204 effective date of this act, the Labor Commissioner  
205 shall submit a report containing an evaluation of  
206 the operation and effectiveness of the pilot  
207 program authorized under this section to the joint  
208 standing committees of the General Assembly having  
209 cognizance of matters relating to appropriations,  
210 human services and labor and public employees.

211 Sec. 7. (NEW) The Labor Department and each  
212 regional work force development board shall submit  
213 quarterly reports to the Connecticut Training and

214 Employment Commission (CTEC) and annual reports to  
215 the Governor and the joint standing committees of  
216 the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
217 relating to appropriations, human services and  
218 labor and public employees. Each report shall  
219 contain an evaluation of the operation of the  
220 "Workers As Learners" initiative established in  
221 section 2 of this act, including the number of  
222 persons served under the program, their gender and  
223 outcomes. Additionally, each report shall provide  
224 specific information regarding the  
225 cost-effectiveness of the program.

226 STATEMENT OF LEGISLATIVE COMMISSIONERS: The  
227 statutory reference to the federal Social Security  
228 Act in section 3 has been changed from 42 USC  
229 403(a)(5)(C)(ii)(I) to 42 USC 603(a)(5)(C)(ii)(I)  
230 for accuracy. In addition, minor changes in  
231 grammar detected in the final proofreading of the  
232 bill were corrected.

233 LAB COMMITTEE VOTE: YEA 9 NAY 5 JFS C/R HS  
234 HS COMMITTEE VOTE: YEA 9 NAY 5 JFS C/R APP  
235 APP COMMITTEE VOTE: YEA 33 NAY 17 JFS-LCO

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"THE FOLLOWING FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT AND BILL ANALYSIS ARE PREPARED FOR THE BENEFIT OF MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, SOLELY FOR PURPOSES OF INFORMATION, SUMMARIZATION AND EXPLANATION AND DO NOT REPRESENT THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OR EITHER HOUSE THEREOF FOR ANY PURPOSE."

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**FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT - BILL NUMBER sSB 500**

STATE IMPACT	See Explanation Below
MUNICIPAL IMPACT	None
STATE AGENCY(S)	Departments of Social Services and Labor

**EXPLANATION OF ESTIMATES:**

The bill specifies that funding shall be provided through state funds and federal grants. While funds have not been specifically appropriated in SHB 5051, the budget bill as favorably reported by the Appropriations Committee, there are funds within both the Departments of Social Services (DSS) and Labor (DOL) associated with employment services and job training. DSS is appropriated \$3.5 million for the purpose of transitioning TFA clients from cash assistance to self-sufficient jobs. The Department of Labor has also been appropriated \$19 million for one-stop employment services. These funds are part of the maintenance-of-effort funding required to receive the federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grant. In addition, the legislature has appropriated a \$12 million federal Welfare-to-Work grant to be used by the regional workforce development boards and the Department of Labor for the purpose of assisting TFA clients in finding and maintaining employment.

These state and federal funds are an integral part of the state's efforts to assist welfare clients in becoming employable and self-sufficient, as well as to meet the federal welfare work participation

requirements. Failure to meet these requirements result in a significant loss in TANF block grant funds.

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### OLR BILL ANALYSIS

SSB 500

#### AN ACT CONCERNING JOB TRAINING

**SUMMARY:** This bill requires the state to adopt by July 1, 1999 a worker self-sufficiency standard that measures the income a person needs to care for his family. The state is to use the standard in planning and evaluating state-supported services to help unemployed people get jobs and help workers improve their job opportunities.

The bill also establishes in the Labor Department a "Workers as Learners" program available to all employers, employees, unemployed workers, and people receiving public assistance. (The bill provides no starting date for the program.) The program objective is to enhance business competitiveness by increasing worker language proficiency, skills, and education.

The bill also requires that the Labor Department, in cooperation with regional work force development boards, establish two two-year pilot projects to benefit temporary family assistance (TFA) recipients. The first is to expand work-study opportunities, employer job training, and child care facilities at training institutions. It must also establish competitive grants to institutions and firms for new training initiatives. The second is to improve access to transportation for workers and job seekers, enabling them to reach work, school, or child care facilities. The bill requires that federal Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) block grants or other unspecified state funds be used to pay for these projects. (The bill sets no starting dates for the projects, and the link between them and the Workers as Learners program is not clear.)

The labor commissioner must adopt regulations to implement the pilot projects and, by October 1, 1999, report their progress to the General Assembly. The



Labor Department and each regional work force development board must report Workers as Learners program progress quarterly to the Connecticut Training and Employment Commission and annually to the governor and the General Assembly.

EFFECTIVE DATE: October 1, 1998

#### **FURTHER EXPLANATION**

##### **Self-Sufficiency Standard**

The bill requires the state to adopt by July 1, 1999 a worker self-sufficiency standard, which is a calculation of the income an employed adult needs to cover his family's expenses for such basics as housing, food, day care, transportation, and medical needs. It must take into account geographical variations and differences in age and number of children in each family. State agencies must use the standard in planning and evaluating state-supported services to help unemployed people get jobs and help workers improve their job opportunities. The bill does not say how state agencies are to use the standard. But it applies the standard as an indicator of whether a TFA beneficiary who has found work may need to learn additional skills.

##### **"Workers as Learners" Program**

The program combines basic education and occupational skills training with work experience and employment. It must offer at least (1) work-study, internships, or apprenticeships; (2) on- or near-site adult skills training related to job opportunities; (3) occupational skills training; (4) case management and counseling in work skills; and (5) where needed, subsidized child care and transportation. It includes Labor Department assessment and Department of Social Services (DSS) screening of people's work-related characteristics and training needs. The Labor Department and regional work force development boards must provide eligible public assistance recipients with child care, transportation, and referral for substance abuse and domestic violence problems.

The bill requires that the Labor Department evaluate the work situation of each person eligible to receive a

public subsidy for training services in order to develop his job training plan. The assessment evaluates individual work history, education, basic skill level, and occupational interests. It also covers barriers to employment, including domestic violence or substance abuse, as well as needs for transportation, child care, and support services.

The bill requires DSS to screen for participation in the program all TFA recipients who have time limits on their benefits. The screening identifies the recipient's language proficiency, skills, work experience, job interests, and barriers to employment, which include (1) failure to complete secondary education or lack of general equivalency certificate, plus low skills in reading or math; (2) need for substance abuse treatment for employment; and (3) poor work history.

The initial screening of unemployed TFA recipients must take place by December 31, 1998. If it has already done similar screening for a recipient, DSS must record the date and nature. The DSS must then refer to the Workers as Learners program those unemployed recipients who have two or more barriers to employment or have been unable for three months to get work. The DSS must also offer, in writing, the opportunity to participate in the Workers as Learners program to working recipients who desire skills to improve their chances for becoming self-sufficient, as determined by the bill's standard.

When DSS refers an unemployed TFA recipient to the Workers as Learners program, the Labor Department and the regional work force development boards must conduct a new evaluation using the initial assessment criteria. They must then provide job training and support services tailored to help the recipient meet the program goals. The support services include child care, transportation, and referral for substance abuse or domestic violence problems.

#### **Participant Compliance with Federal TANF**

If, following screening or assessment, an unemployed TFA recipient participates in an education or training program intended to help him find a job or improve his work skills and earning potential, he is deemed to comply with the TANF work participation requirements.

The program in which he enrolls must (1) be approved by a state agency or its contractor, (2) target available jobs, and (3) comply with TANF. If he fails without good cause to perform satisfactorily in the program, he is deemed not to comply with TANF.

### **Two-Year Pilot Projects**

The Labor Department, working with each regional work force development board, must establish two pilot projects. The first project focuses on education and training, but also on child care services to students who are parents. It calls for expanding:

1. work-study opportunities at community-technical colleges and vocational-technical high schools;
2. child care programs at the same institutions, including awarding of bond money where needed for capital improvements; and
3. Labor Department customized job training grants to employers for their workers.

It also calls for awarding competitive grants to community-technical colleges, vocational-technical high schools, local or regional boards of education, educational service centers that offer adult education programs, employers, and community-based education providers. These are grants to encourage innovative short courses, flexible class schedules, contextual learning curricula related to job skills, innovative distance learning, or on-site learning initiatives.

The second project deals with helping workers obtain reliable transportation to places of work, education and training, and child care.

The labor commissioner must adopt regulations implementing the two projects. The regulations must include award criteria and terms and conditions for grants under the first project, and eligibility requirements under the second. The Labor Department must use allocations from the federal TANF block grant or other state funds to pay for both projects. By October 1, 1999, the department must report evaluations of each project to the Appropriations, Human Services,

and Labor and Public Employees committees.

**Other Reporting Requirements**

The Labor Department and each regional work force development board must report evaluations of the Workers as Learners program quarterly to the Connecticut Training and Employment Commission and annually to the governor and the Appropriations, Human Services, and Labor and Public Employees committees. The reports must include the number and gender of people served as well as the outcomes, with specific information on program cost-effectiveness.

**COMMITTEE ACTION**

Labor and Public Employees Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference  
Yea 9        Nay 5

Human Services Committee

Joint Favorable Substitute Change of Reference  
Yea 9        Nay 5

Appropriations Committee

Joint Favorable Report  
Yea 33        Nay 17